



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Eastern District of California*

*McGregor W. Scott
United States Attorney*

*501 I Street, Suite 10-100
Sacramento, California 95814*

*916/554-2700
Fax 916/554-2900*

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*Contact: Patty Pontello, 916-554-2706
www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae/home*

RICHMOND MAN CHARGED IN FRAUDULENT CREDIT CARD SCHEME

SACRAMENTO - - United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that a federal grand jury in Sacramento returned an indictment charging BENNIE JOHNSON, 26, of Richmond, California, with multiple counts of credit card fraud.

This case was investigated by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

According to Assistant United States Attorney James P. Arguelles, who is prosecuting the case, the indictment charges that during the period of January through June of 2004, defendant JOHNSON participated in a credit card fraud scheme involving the use of altered credit cards to make fraudulent purchases. Specifically, the indictment charges that JOHNSON used credit cards which appeared to be in his own name, but on which the magnetic swipe on the back of the card had been altered to reflect the account number of an unknowing victim. As a result, when the card was electronically read, the actual account number which appeared on the magnetic swipe, and to which the purchase was charged, belonged to the unknowing victim.

If convicted, defendant JOHNSON faces a maximum sentence of fifteen years in prison and up to a \$250,000 fine for each count of credit fraud which is charged.

The charges in the indictment are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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